

Appendix C

Scoping Activities and Results

December, 2003

- BLM (V. Williams, BLM-Taos Field Office Wildlife Biologist, lead) meetings with U.S. Forest Service to discuss project and funding through the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP). Discussions with Rio Grande Restoration on application processes. *Results:* Project received high marks from U.S. Forest Service for viability and funding potential.

January, 2004

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) attended U.S. Forest Service CFRP Workshop, Santa Fe, NM. *Results:* Network with organizations and individuals in the business of forest restoration and Bosque management to eradicate saltcedar and other noxious weeds.
- BLM (V. Williams, lead) Request for Proposal submitted to the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Habitat Stamp Program for treatment of noxious weeds in the project area to benefit fisheries and anglers. *Results:* Awarded \$10,000 for treatment of saltcedar.

March, 2004

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) presentation given to the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps on Southwestern willow flycatcher, saltcedar and riparian ecosystems, relating the three concepts and their interrelatedness. *Results:* Taos youth educated on issues and responded positively to wildlife aspects of the project.
- BLM (V. Williams, lead) field trip with Bureau of Reclamation to assess the vegetation and collect soil samples. *Results:* Soils samples showed non-significant results in fertility, salinity and organic matter, while stands of saltcedar were of older age classes without substantial recruitment in the understory.

May, 2004

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) presentation given to local river outfitters on riparian ecosystem functions, invasive weeds in the form of saltcedar and endangered species issues surrounding the Southwestern willow flycatcher. *Results:* Expressed support of the effort to remove the saltcedar, which would provide boaters with a more aesthetically pleasing recreational experience. Would like to sponsor areas to treat and monitor.
- BLM (V. Williams, lead) attended Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory Grassland Bird/Range Workshop, Roy, NM. *Results:* Site visits and discussion on saltcedar treatments using herbicides and grazing with both needing re-treatments to control or eradicate weeds.

July, 2004

- BLM (C. Roberge, intern) attended San Juan Pueblo's Riparian Restoration Workshop, San Juan Pueblo, NM. *Results:* Discussion on riparian restoration, with site visits to mechanical treatments on the Rio Grande to view Bosque restoration below the project area.
- BLM (V. Williams, lead) attended Southwestern Noxious Weed Short Course, Farmington, NM. *Results:* Education on weed biology and Integrated Pest Management techniques, with site visits to local weed infestations.

August, 2004

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) participated in the Taos Weed Fair held in the Taos County Agricultural Building, Taos, NM, to present the proposal and solicit comments from the public. *Results:* No comments were received at that meeting. Two names and addresses were provided for further informational mailings.

December, 2004

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) request for proposal submitted to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for treatment of noxious weeds in the project area. *Results:* Awarded \$43,380 for treatment of saltcedar and noxious weeds in the project area.

January, 2005

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) attended Upper Rio Grande watershed group meeting. *Results:* Shared proposed project with attendees and discussed importance of including the same in the Water Restoration Action Strategy Plan. Project received positive feedback from the group and was included in their list of projects to work on.
- BLM (V. Williams, lead) attended U.S. Forest Service CFRP Workshop, Santa Fe, NM. *Results:* Network with organizations and individuals in the business of forest restoration and Bosque management to eradicate saltcedar and other noxious weeds.

February, 2005

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) attended Upper Rio Grande watershed group meeting and Rio Pueblo de Taos watershed group meeting. *Results:* Shared proposed project with attendees and discussed importance of including the same in the Water Restoration Action Strategy Plan. Project received positive feedback from the group and was included in their list of projects to work on.

March, 2005

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) attended Upper Rio Grande watershed group meeting and Rio Pueblo de Taos watershed group meeting. *Results:* Shared proposed project with attendees and discussed importance of including the same in the Water Restoration Action Strategy Plan. Project received positive feedback from the group and was included in their list of projects to work on.

May, 2005

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) field trip to project area with Zeri Sustainable, Inc. *Results:* Project was viewed favorably and discussed the potential for reuse of saltcedar material removed from the site to provide economic opportunities.

June, 2005

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) two-day field trip to project area with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, NM Cooperative Extension Office, Taos Chapter Native Plant Society, Taos County Noxious Weed Committee. *Results:* Developed criteria and rationale for prioritizing areas for treatment.
- BLM (V. Williams, lead) attended meeting of Taos County Noxious Weed Committee. *Results:* Positive comments received about removing noxious weeds with concern over use of chemicals.

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) attended Upper Rio Grande watershed group meeting and Rio Pueblo de Taos watershed group meeting. *Results:* Shared proposed project with attendees and discussed importance of including the same in the Water Restoration Action Strategy Plan. Project received positive feedback from the group and was included in their list of projects to work on.

July 2005

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) attendance of River Clean Up sponsored by Amigos Bravos adjacent to the project area on the Rio Pueblo de Taos. *Results:* Discussed saltcedar and noxious weeds with participants. All oral responses were positive in moving towards native riparian restoration.
- BLM (T. Burt, Biology Technician) attended meeting of Taos County Noxious Weed Committee. *Results:* Feedback included positive remarks towards removing noxious weeds; however, concern was expressed over use of chemicals.
- BLM (V. Williams, lead) meeting with collaborative partners, including Upper Rio Grande watershed group, Taos Chapter Native Plant Society, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, New Mexico State Forestry, Rio Grande Restoration, and Regenesi, to present an update on the project and solicit feedback from the individuals present. *Results:* Participants agreed with the criteria and priorities and to the mutual desired outcome of restored biodiversity.

August, 2005

- BLM (T. Burt, Biology Technician) attended Southwestern Noxious Weed Short Course, Farmington, NM. *Results:* Education on weed biology and Integrated Pest Management techniques, with site visits to local weed infestations.

September, 2005

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) informal survey of the residents of Pilar was made during the Pilar Studio Tour. *Results:* Each resident (5 in number) spoke to responded positively on noxious weed control, including the use of chemicals as long as it was not aerially applied.
- BLM (V. Williams, lead) public meeting at the Rio Grande Gorge Visitor Center in Pilar, NM, to obtain information and feedback on the proposed action and alternatives. *Results:* Participants agreed with the criteria and priorities and to the mutual desired outcome of restored biodiversity. Expressed a desire to sponsor areas to treat and monitor.

November, 2005

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) presentation to the New Mexico Association of RC&D Councils' Annual Meeting on the proposed action. *Results:* information on publics concerned with use of chemicals in Taos County; including organic farmers below project area in scoping process; and one question on how many acres were included in the project area.
- BLM (V. Williams, lead) public meeting at the Taos Civic Center, Taos, NM, to obtain information and feedback on the proposed action and alternatives. *Results:* Participants agreed with the criteria and priorities and to the mutual desired outcome of restored biodiversity. One in attendance did not want to see chemicals used along the river regardless of any mitigation and scientific or economic reasons presented in the analysis.

December, 2005

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) article on the proposed action in the NM Chapter of The Wildlife Society with contact information provided for questions or concerns. *Results:* No feedback to date.

February, 2006

- BLM (V. Williams, lead) met with Carson Forest Watch to discuss wildlife aspects of saltcedar treatments. *Results:* Incorporation of vertical structure components and treating non-contiguous sites in the project area into proposed action.

March, 2006

- BLM (V. Williams, lead; Sam DesGeorges, Field Office Manager) attended meeting with concerned citizens of the Taos Weed Committee and others to discuss Environmental Assessment. *Results:* Agreed to the use of Habitat[®] (Imazapyr) as the herbicide to be used on noxious weeds (saltcedar and perennial pepperweed primarily), with manual treatments to be conducted in areas where it is feasible for regular root pruning and maintenance to effect control.

May, 2006

- BLM (V. Williams, lead; Tarah Burt, Wildlife Biologist Technician) attended meeting with Taos Weed Committee, Forest Guardians and others to discuss Environmental Assessment and saltcedar treatments. *Results:* Incorporation of extractor method where feasible under a mechanical treatment, and additional discussion over public volunteer component, with agreement to treat manually wherever feasible in project area, restricting herbicide treatments to those areas that are not easily accessible for regular root pruning.